

RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural
Experiment Station



May 2024

WATER PAGES eNEWSLETTER

Growing Green Infrastructure Knowledge One Green Infrastructure Champion at a Time

The Green Infrastructure Champions Training Program was offered for a sixth year in a row with ten unique and completely virtual educational sessions offered from January through May 2024! The 2024 Green Infrastructure Champion Training Program was a huge success with a total of 197 participants completing five or more sessions to become certified Green Infrastructure Champions and leaders who can advocate for green infrastructure in their communities. Participants represented 20 different counties in New Jersey, and 77 participants were from outside of New Jersey.

Here are the 2024 numbers:

- 10 training sessions (via Zoom) with an average attendance = 181
- # of people who attended at least one session = 350
- # of people who attended at least five sessions a.k.a. Green Infrastructure Champions = 197
- # government/municipal organizations = 130
- # NGOs/Partnerships/Nonprofit Organizations/Academic = 164
- # of private organizations = 39

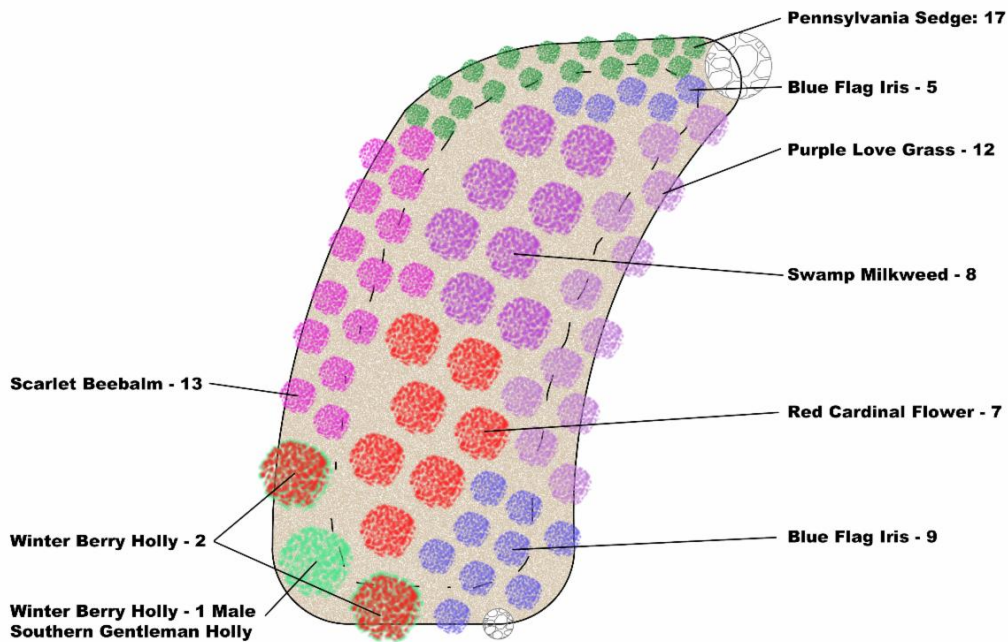
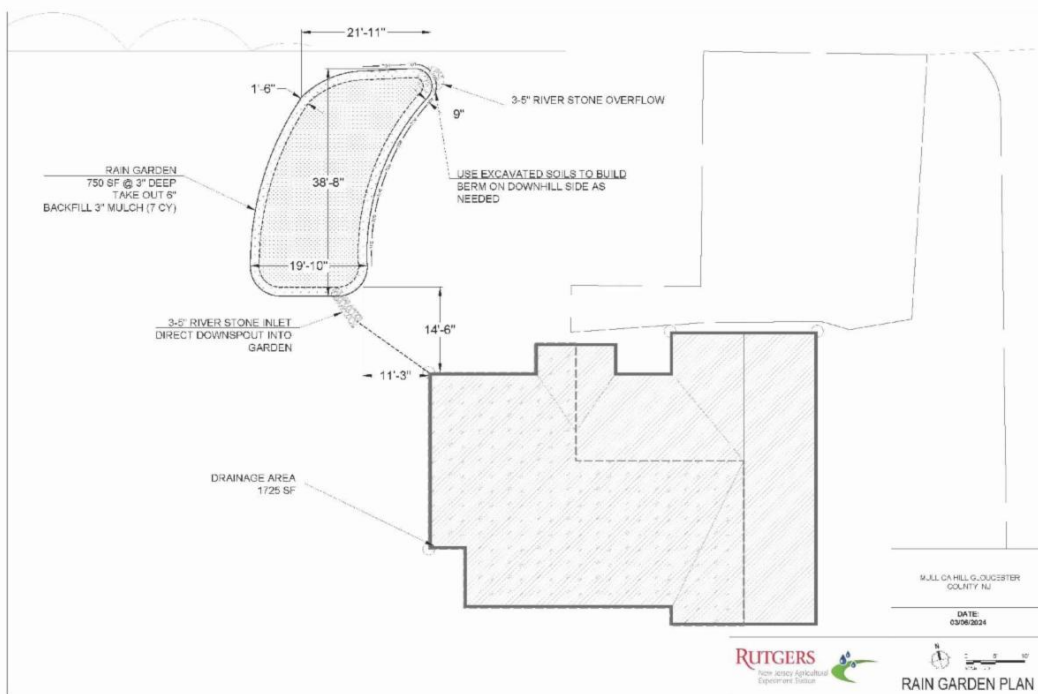
The Green Infrastructure Champions Training Program is an Extension program that was created to empower local stakeholders to play a dominant role in encouraging municipalities and other property owners to implement green stormwater infrastructure practices. This educational program continues to train and certify Green Infrastructure Champions to be able to: 1) enhance their knowledge through green infrastructure seminars and research, 2) engage community leaders to adopt green infrastructure as a stormwater management solution by updating ordinances and municipal master plans, 3) encourage local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and schools to incorporate green infrastructure in their existing landscaping, 4) secure funding for green infrastructure, and 5) publicize implementation of green infrastructure.

The 2024 program was partially funded by the **New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station**, **Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation**, **NJ Sea Grant Consortium**, and **William Penn Foundation** and will continue in 2025 as a collaboration of the **Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program** and the Green Infrastructure Subcommittee of **Jersey Water Works**.



Homeowner Rain Garden Rebate Program - Spring 2024

The Water Resources Program has had an amazing spring residential rain garden rebate season! We partnered with groups from all over New Jersey over the past few months to provide a Rain Garden Rebate Program for homeowners. Our partners for these rebate sessions have been **Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, South Jersey Land & Water Trust, American Littoral Society, New Jersey Highlands Coalition, and Lopatcong Creek Initiative** with funding from the **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station**. The Rain Garden Rebate Program is a program designed to provide incentives for homeowners to install rain gardens on their property to help reduce flooding and improve water quality. The program is run virtually, so we are able to reach more people and able to see the person's property without actually conducting a site visit. We have held six (6) one-hour rain garden educational zoom talks with 241 attendees. After the educational talk, we provided an opportunity for the homeowners to have a consultation with an engineer and a landscape architect from the Water Resources Program. We held three full days of technical sessions, where we held 27 individual zoom calls with homeowners to discuss their property and determine the best location for a rain garden. The Water Resources Program staff has designed 27 rain gardens to capture stormwater runoff from a total drainage area of 16,733 square feet. If all the newly designed rain gardens from this program are installed, they could potentially capture 490,221 gallons of stormwater per year. We are excited to see what the homeowners are able to create over the next few months!



Sample design plan and planting plan from the 2024 Rain Garden Rebate Program for homeowners

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